United Nations

Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council deplores lack of Iraqi cooperation with United Nations inspection of its weapons programmes as well as decision by Iraqi authorities to break off talks on oil sales to finance essential humanitarian needs.

- Secretary-General says current circumstances in Yugoslavia do not permit him to recommend deployment of United Nations peace-keeping force "at this time"; proposes to enlarge group of United Nations military liaison officers in that country.

- Secretary-General, in opening statement at 1992 session of Special Committee on decolonization, says he will actively pursue peaceful solution to conflict in Western Sahara in cooperation with Organization of African Unity.

- Security Council recommends to General Assembly that Republic of Moldova be admitted to United Nations membership; refers application of Republic of Turkmenistan to Committee for Admission of New Members to United Nations.

- Somali Chargé d'Affaires says United Nations efforts to resolve conflict would not be seen as interference in his country's internal affairs.

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The Security Council held consultations today pursuant to paragraph 21 of resolution 687 (1991) which requests the Council to review the sanctions regime against Iraq every sixty days.

In a press statement following consultations, Council President Thomas R. Pickering of the United States concluded that that there was no agreement that the necessary conditions existed for a modification of the regime established in that resolution.

(more)

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Referring to the Secretary-General's report on Iraq's compliance with all the obligations placed upon it by resolution 687, Council members expressed concern with the lack of Iraqi cooperation, noting that while progress had been made, much remained to be done. There was serious evidence of Iraqi non-compliance over its programmes for weapons of mass destruction and the repatriation of Kuwaitis and other third country nationals detained in Iraq. Also, according to the statement, there was still much Kuwaiti property to be returned. The Council called for full compliance with resolution 687 and subsequent resolutions.

Also by the statement, the Council strongly deplored the Iraqi decision to discontinue contacts with the United Nations regarding Iraqi oil sales to finance the purchase of foodstuffs, medicines and materials for the purpose of providing humanitarian relief to the civilian population. Members of the Council underscored that the Government of Iraq, by acting in this way, was foregoing the possibility of meeting the essential needs of its civilian population and therefore bore the full responsibility for their humanitarian problems. The Council expressed the hope that a resumption of the contacts might lead to the early implementation of the scheme set out in its resolutions to enable humanitarian supplies to reach the Iraqi people.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has stated in a report to the Security Council that although the cease-fire in Yugoslavia is generally holding, despite allegations of cease-fire violations, "it is clear that the circumstances" in that country do not permit him to recommend the deployment of a United Nations peace-keeping force "at this time".

The Secretary-General said however that the level of violations of the cease-fire reported by Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding was "not sufficiently grave to make it impossible to deploy a United Nations operation", if the other necessary conditions for such deployment were fulfilled.

In his report to the Council, dated 4 February, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali noted that the 50 United Nations military liaison officers, which were deployed to Yugoslavia in mid-January, were making "a significant contribution" to the efforts of the international community to maintain the cease-fire in that country. He therefore recommended that the group be modestly enlarged to 75 officers for technical reasons related to the fact that its deployment in Yugoslavia now seemed likely to be rather longer than originally envisaged.

The Secretary-General further reported that he had been disturbed to hear of allegations that the arms embargo imposed by the Security Council was not being observed and called for the scrupulous compliance with the embargo. (S/23513)

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The Secretary-General, opening the 1992 session of the Special Committee on Decolonization, said today that he had had positive contacts with the two protagonists to the conflict in Western Sahara over the past few days, and, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU), would actively pursue a peaceful solution.

The Secretary-General went on to say that the Plan of Action adopted by the General Assembly last year, aimed at attaining complete decolonization by the year 2000, would benefit from the prevailing atmosphere of serenity in international relations. He called on the partners in the decolonization process, the administering Powers and the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, to cooperate more closely with the United Nations in that endeavour. He also urged the specialized agencies and other institutions associated with the Organization to substantially increase their support for the small island Territories.

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The Security Council recommended this afternoon to the General Assembly that the Republic of Moldova be admitted to membership in the United Nations. The Council took that action, without a vote, in the first of two meetings on admission of new members.

In a second meeting this afternoon, the Council referred action on the application of Turkmenistan to the Committee on the Admission of New Members of the United Nations.

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The Chargé d'Affaires of the Somali Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Fatun Mohammed Hassan, has urged the Security Council to intercede in the current crisis in Somalia, stressing that no measures - "even if coercive" - would be interpreted as interference in its internal affairs, since the effect would be the saving of lives and the restoration of human dignity.

In a letter to the Council President, dated 30 January, Mr. Hassan recommended a two-pronged approach: a cease-fire, maintained if necessary by force, and a "national reconciliation conference", backed by the United Nations, and with the re-establishment of Somali unity as its central purpose. Any clan opposing that unity with separatist or secessionist intentions, he said, should face the threat of sanctions.

He added that the fact that the warring factions "are all tired of this interminable situation augured well for concerted and unrelenting international efforts to bring them together".

It was also confirmed at Headquarters today that the Secretary-General was waiting for replies to the invitations he had sent to the various parties involved in the Somali conflict and to the leaders of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the League of Arab States and the Islamic Conference to attend a meeting in New York next week.

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